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A PRACTICAL MOVE TOWARD UNITY

By Felix Morley

In a disturbing atmosphere of gloom the Security Council of UNO will next week assemble in New York. Apprehension is encouraged not merely by the magnitude of the issues dividing the representatives of the victorious Powers, but also by the difficulty of dealing effectively with these issues through the machinery of the San Francisco Charter.

That constitution of inter-governmental organization is based on an assumption of unity of purpose among at least the five permanent members of the Security Council — China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States. Under Article 27 of the Charter, which establishes the veto power for these five Governments, "Decisions of the Security Council . . . shall be made by an affirmative vote of seven members including the concurring votes of the permanent members . . ."

When the Council is considering the pacific settlement of an international dispute a Council member which is a party to that dispute must abstain from voting in any decisions which may be taken. But the veto power can be applied by a permanent member of the Council to block any action, as contrasted with verbal condemnation, against itself.

In spite of much official pretense to the contrary the Charter of the United Nations is really an even weaker instrument for the restraint of aggression than was the Covenant of the League of Nations. If any one of the five privileged Powers decides to pursue the path of conquest there is no way under the Charter whereby it can be halted.

That structural weakness, largely concealed from the American people during the enthusiastic propaganda campaign in behalf of the Charter, is at last out in the open. Undoubtedly it was something of a shock to many to hear from Winston Churchill that the most practical immediate method of blocking continued aggression by Russia is for the United States and Great Britain to pool forces against the Soviet.

II

Fortunately, there is an alternative course whereby the governmental aggressiveness

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of a Great Power could be curbed by the popular will for peace, permitted to operate through the machinery of the United Nations. This would only involve taking at face value the Preamble of the Charter, which states that "We the peoples of the United Nations . . . do hereby establish an international organization to be known as the United Nations".

As yet, that phrase has no reality. There is no such thing as citizenship in the United Nations, at present a purely inter-governmental organization. "We the peoples", whether American, British, Russian or Argentinian in nationality, have no control whatever over the operation of this machinery for international cooperation. The United States delegation to the General Assembly, like the United States representation on the Security Council, is selected by executive appointment and not by popular choice of any kind.

Obviously it would be in the interests of democracy, and of that "fullest implementation of the principles of the Charter" which President Truman pledges, if our political representatives to UNO, as distinct from their technical advisers, were chosen by the electorate. This could be done either by special election, or as a part of the biennial congressional election procedure. Each party would have its own nominees, a slate of five, with alternates, for the Assembly delegation; a single candidate, with alternate, as U. S. representative on the Council.

The urgent necessity for effective international organization is that its operation should be taken out of the field of secret diplomacy and subjected to the control of the public will for peace. We could give real leadership in this direction by making our representatives to UNO elected officials instead of diplomatic appointees. And popular interest in, and understanding of, UNO would greatly increase if our membership were thus tied in with our normal electoral processes.

III

Every nation which is a Member of UNO could take this step at any time, in accordance with its own constitutional processes (for us an Act of Congress would suffice) without any amendment or modification of the Charter. And analysis of the Charter indicates that a further step, moving toward the establishment of an actual citizenship in UNO, could also be taken without going through the cumbersome procedure of formal amendment.

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If the title "United Nations", and the assertion of the Preamble in regard to "We the peoples", establish anything, it is that a basis of fraternal association more substantial than that of the wartime military alliance has already been laid down. If this is not the case, then all the fine talk, at San Francisco and since, is meaningless.

The absolute prerequisite, if we seek to maintain and develop unity among the United Nations, is that citizens of one Member of the Organization should have a relatively unrestricted right of travel in the territory of other Members.

Such travel would not apply to immigration or emigration for purposes of permanent settlement. But a United Nations passport, permanently valid in the territory of any nation adhering to the Charter of UNO, should be devised and made available to educators, newspaper men, commercial travelers, labor leaders and even to mere tourists with a cultural rather than a professional interest in other countries. The C.I.O. is thinking along this line in urging, in a report made public this week, an interchange of workers' visits with Russia to promote "closer understanding".

As current events abundantly testify, that "closer understanding" will not be achieved by "Big Three" conferences which so far have led only to increasing confusion, acrimony and suspicion. It may be achieved by interchanges, and factual reporting, at less exalted and less secretive levels. And always one is forced back to the conclusion that unless such interchange is promoted by UNO, then all the assertion of an underlying unity will continue to be specious, regardless of popular desire to the contrary.

IV

Even without the United Nations Organization, exchanges of this sort between Canada and this country, two adjacent Members of UNO, are habitual. That this is not merely a matter of a common language is shown by the increasing numbers of Americans who also visit Mexico. That it is not merely a matter of propinquity is shown by the numbers of Americans now traveling to Great Britain and France, in spite of food and other shortages there.

The best way to raise the "iron curtain" which, in Winston Churchill's phrase, has descended over Russian-occupied Europe is to insist that, as a logical consequence of UNO membership, accredited newapaper men and others be allowed free access to Russian territory.

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The arrangement would of course be reciprocal. But we have nothing to fear from admitting representatives of Pravda and Izvestia to study and report on our way of life. They would be a welcome variation from the domestic brand of Communist who so often dishonestly tries to conceal his ideological loyalty.

It may be argued that the Soviet Government would refuse to admit Americans, or to allow them any freedom of investigation in Russia, on the basis suggested. At least Moscow should be given opportunity to accept a procedure looking toward greater unity. The grave deficiency in Mr. Churchill's argument is that by advocating what looks very much like an Anglo-American alliance against Russia he gives that nation a moral advantage, and an excuse to take retaliatory measures. If Russia openly refuses to raise the "iron curtain" which now blocks off observers from other United Nations, then the moral advantage would be taken from Stalin's hands. That, in itself, would be some gain.

What Mr. Churchill advocates is essentially the establishment of an Anglo-American Empire. Others wish to see a broader union of democracies, excluding Russia and its totalitarian satellites. Still others talk half-despairingly of the need for an inclusive "World Government" in which the various nations would be as the States in our Federal Union. Meantime Russia moves, surely and not so slowly, to build a Communist World State by progressively undermining adjacent governments, like that of Iran, where the Red Army is in a position to place left-wing elements in power.

Of the above proposals all but the third are pointed in the direction of an even deeper cleavage within the United Nations; and the third, which seeks to build a roof before the walls are up, is as yet unpractical. Therefore it is urgent to ascertain whether UNO has the ability to take these two easily attainable steps in the direction of world unity.

The first of these practical steps would be for this country to give the lead in electing, rather than in appointing, its UNO representatives. The second, which could be approve at next week's meeting of the Security Council, would be UNO passports entitling individuals to that free travel within the territories of the Organization which is an elemental and fundamental right of citizenship.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. III - No. 12

By Frank C. Hanighen March 20, 1946

The British Government is not trying to draw the United States into a war against Russia, as the Communists have charged. Indeed, if the pendulum of American foreign policy makes an extreme swing from the recent "appeasement" to a really "hard-boiled" attitude toward Soviet Russia, we may find London more inclined than ourselves to urge moderation and compromise. Britain, of course, wants the United States always ready to back it up, but prefers to follow a more cautious policy toward Russia than many friends of Britain in this country desire.

Thus, Foreign Minister Bevin on March 16, rejected all responsibility for Churchill's Missouri speech and renewed his offer to extend to fifty years Britain's twenty-year alliance with Russia. He obviously fears that Churchill has misrepresented Britain's policy both in Moscow and in the United States. Also he is quite probably reflecting a trend in British opinion, and particularly Labor Party opinion, which must be reckoned with as a considerable factor in shaping Britain's foreign policy.

This trend is seen in an article in the Economist (February 9) entitled "The Operation Was Successful", in which the phrase "But the Patient Died" is completed, and Bevin is chided for fighting bold verbal battles with Vishinsky at UNO, without achieving results of constructive value for peace. Also, in the current Political Quarterly, three prominent British figures speak even more forthrightly.

One of them, R. H. S. Crossman, Labor M.P., argues for a "Western Union", which would be on a cultural and economic basis only, as against a "Western Bloc" which would be militarily strategic and therefore opposed by Russia. The Western Union would include Britain. It, Mr. Crossman says, "excludes by definition American participation (and Russian) . . . its members must make it clear from the outset that they would be neutral in any third world war. . . . We should be concerned to neutralize Europe altogether in the event of Russian-American conflict."

Mr. Crossman, in short, advocates a policy for which, if he were an American speaking of America, he would be roundly denounced as "isolationist". Why does he take this view? The atomic bomb, he says, has made "the British Isles completely indefensible in any third world war. . . . That war would inevitably destroy the limited power which remains to this island."

In another piece, Mr. Aylmer Vallance, former Editor of the News Chronicle, shares Crossman's gloomy views of Britain in another war, "The days when Britain can afford to act as an unsinkable aircraft carrier at the United States' disposal are over. Since America will never attack the British Commonwealth, whereas Russia's intentions in this respect are unknown, priority is bound to be given by Britain to the need of cementing friendly relations with the U.S.S.R. even if it involves sharply dissociating herself from the policies of the U.S. . . . Britain must seek safety in a policy of absolute neutrality. . . . Our one over-riding purpose must be to keep out of the ring in the third world war. . . ." In a third (Political Quarterly) article, Kingsley Martin, Editor of the influential New Statesman, urges a policy of conciliation and emphasizes the impracticability of fighting Russia. Although these men are of the Left, there is little doubt that their views are shared by many British conservatives.

This is not to say that they will finally prevail. But this attitude responds as deeply as did that of Neville Chamberlain (in his appeasement phase) to much of British thinking. Unless Russia should upset the European apple cart by some drastic military move, their influence may have no little effect on British, and in turn, on American policy.

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The political stock of Governor Stassen has descended sharply. His failure to stand up and make a fight for the Minnesota Republican Senatorial nomination against incumbent Senator Shipstead has considerably damaged his prestige. Also, by putting up his own candidate, Governor Thye, to run against Shipstead, he has won no respect. Stassen's calculation is rather obvious: If Thye loses, Stassen will nevertheless remain a factor in the national scene. If Thye wins, Stassen can take political credit. But political experts doubt that things will work out that way.

As Stassen's chances for the Presidential nomination in 1948 grow slighter, another Republican figure moves in. Politicians of both parties are now talking of a Vandenberg-for-President boom. The Senator from Michigan has been receiving a very good press recently, and his role in UNO has given him prominence. If foreign policy is of primary importance in 1948, then Vandenberg's chances stand to increase; otherwise they will be a parallel to his short-lived "boomlets" in 1936 and 1940. Meanwhile, as a moderate "internationalist" and as a former "isolationist", Vandenberg should attract to his banner numerous middle-of-the-road elements.

The return to the Republican Party of Senator LaFollette and his Progressive followers is an event which cannot help but strengthen the Republican Party. He is expected to draw in his wake many liberal elements, especially in the Middle West, who have been traditionally suspicious of the GOP conservative leadership. The LaFollette adhesion is of no help to Governor Stassen, as the Wisconsin Senator has been far from friendly to the latter's pretensions to leadership of Republican liberals.

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Russian deportment at the crucial meeting of the UNO Security Council in New York next week can spell disaster, or temporary convalescence, or success and longevity for the international organization. The deteriorating Iranian situation scheduled for review there may prove decisive to UNO's fate. The British apparently prefer the United States to "carry the ball" at the meeting, reserving for their role that of moderator. There are some last minute regrets that a personal Big Three conference has not preceded the Council gathering. But in regard to this the cynical ask: "A Berchtesgaden before a Munich?"

What the Russians will do, other than try to present a stooge Iranian government as a fait accompli, remains a highly uncertain factor. But, on the eve of the meeting, there are some indications of American plans. The President is reportedly considering a revival of an earlier proposal on which he based some hope of conciliation. After the Potsdam Conference, (See NMG, September 19, 1945), Truman suggested the internationalization of European waterways, including the Dardanelles, apparently unaware that this was unacceptable to Russia. Russia, as we now know, wants a base on those Straits -- in short, exclusive military control. (This fact, incidentally, was first authoritatively disclosed by Mr. Churchill in New York; British sources are more generous than our Administration.)

The project went under a cloud, but now again inspires White House hopes for a solution at New York of European conflicts. High Administration circles which have been talking of this waterways project restrict its scope rigidly to Europe; and reject any suggestion that it should apply to the Panama Canal. "That is quite another matter", they say; thereby illustrating the essentially isolationist base of what is professedly an internationalist attitude.

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President Truman has asked General Marshall to become Secretary of State, it is authoritatively reported, to replace Mr. Byrnes, who wishes to retire. The Presidential offer was sent to Marshall in China. It is understood that the General is inclined to

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